



Saguaro National Park News Release

12-39

For Immediate Release

June 18, 2012

Contact: Estee Rivera Murdock at (520)733-8613

SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK SELECTED AS 2012 NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION AMERICA'S BEST IDEA GRANT RECIPIENT

Tucson, AZ – Saguaro National Park has been selected as one of 49 national parks participating in the 2012 [America's Best Idea program](#) sponsored by the [National Park Foundation](#), the official charity of America's national parks. Inspired by the critically-acclaimed Ken Burns documentary, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*, the America's Best Idea grant program funds park projects designed to connect diverse, under-engaged populations throughout the United States with their national parks in innovative and meaningful ways. Saguaro National Park has partnered with the Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall Foundation to pilot a model with the Udall Parks in Focus program.

As part of the Parks in Focus program, youth from the Boys and Girls Club will visit numerous state and national parks in Arizona, including an overnight backpacking trip into Saguaro National Park's Wilderness in the Rincon Mountains and a week-long excursion to Grand Canyon National Park. Each participant will learn the principles of photography and will photo document their experiences throughout the summer and fall. The images created by the young photographers will be exhibited at several photo exhibits this fall, including the Rincon Mountain Visitor Center in Saguaro National Park.

The program at Saguaro National Park will also serve as model for the Udall Foundation's Scholars, undergraduate leaders selected for their demonstrated commitment to solving environmental problems. In August 2012, Udall Scholars will be eligible to apply for stipends, funded by this grant, to pilot Parks in Focus projects in their home communities.

"We are proud to provide the much needed support to create unique opportunities for all Americans to personally connect with their national parks," said Neil Mulholland, President and CEO of the National Park Foundation. "The America's Best Idea grants are often the catalyst for extraordinary experiences that develop into lifelong relationships with our national parks for the program participants."

"Saguaro National Park is deeply committed to reaching underserved youth, and we are excited to have this opportunity to partner with the Stewart L. Udall Parks in Focus program," according to Darla Sidles, Saguaro National Park Superintendent. "Our proximity to Tucson and the community of one million residents makes us uniquely positioned to connect youth to a national park in their own back yard."

For a full listing of participating parks and program descriptions, please visit the [National Park Foundation website](#).

The National Park Foundation and Saguaro National Park wish to thank L.L. Bean, DISNEY, the Anschutz Foundation, and the Ahmanson Foundation for their generous support of the America's Best Idea program.

For more information on the [National Park Foundation](#) or how you can support and protect America's national parks, please visit www.nationalparks.org.

For more information about Saguaro National Park please visit www.nps.gov/sagu

About the National Park Foundation. You are the owner of 84 million acres of the world's most treasured memorials, landscapes, ecosystems, and historic sites -- all protected in America's nearly 400 national parks. Chartered by Congress, the National Park Foundation is the official charity of America's national parks. We work hand in hand with the National Park Service to connect you and all Americans to the parks, and to make sure that they are preserved for the generations who will follow. Join us in supporting your national parks -- this is your land. www.nationalparks.org

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